STRATA

PEEL HERITAGE COMPLEX

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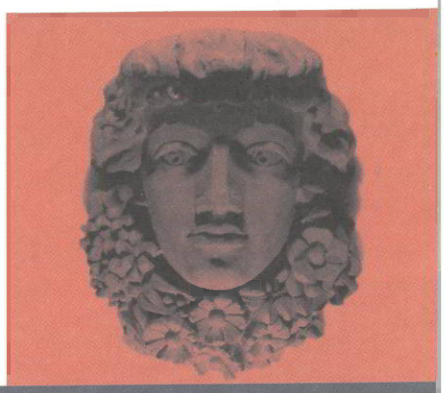
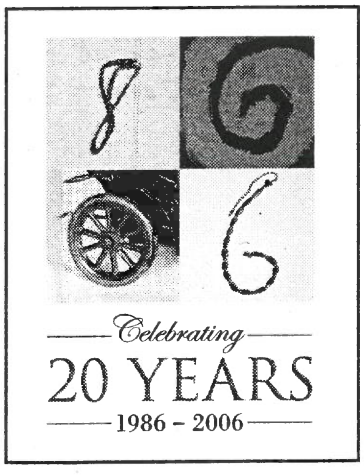


WINTER 2006

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Celebrate, Commemorate and Cultivate

2006 marks the 20th anniversary of the Peel Heritage Complex and the unique partnership of the Archives, Art Gallery and Museum. The Advisory Board have dubbed this year's celebration events "20/20": an opportunity to celebrate and commemorate the last 20 years and cultivate new audiences for the next 20 years. Many events and surprises are being planned for 2006; stay tuned to *Strata* for updates and announcements.



Our logo for the year incorporates images from art, documents and artifacts in our collection. The images were chosen to reflect our anniversary years - 86 and 06.

Have you received your PHC 2006 calendar?
If not, call 905-791-4055, Ext. 3625. Our 20th anniversary desktop calendar features images from the Art Gallery, Archives and Museum collections.

Colony Ford Lincoln Sales Sponsorship and Show

The Peel Heritage Complex is pleased to announce Colony Ford Lincoln Sales, Inc. as its official sponsor for 2006 – our 20th anniversary.

The Peel Heritage Complex plans to celebrate with arts and heritage related activities and initiatives recognizing the significant cultural impact of the Complex in and on the Peel community. These celebrations would not be possible without the support of local businesses such as Colony Ford who value the role of arts and culture within their community.

In appreciation of Colony's sponsorship, the Art Gallery of Peel will be displaying selected works from the Gallery's permanent collection at the Colony Ford Lincoln Sales office located at 300 Queen St. E. in Brampton for the enjoyment of staff, visitors and the community as a whole.

"We are proud to enter this cultural partnership with Colony Ford and are delighted to have them as the premiere sponsor of our 20th anniversary," says Curator, David Somers. "This partnership is a great example of local businesses and institutions helping each other, and in turn making the community a brighter place to live and work."

STRATA
ARCHIVES | ART GALLERY | MUSEUM
PEEL HERITAGE COMPLEX

COMPLEX NEWS

Swing Time at the Peel Heritage Complex with Swing Rosie

Swing Rosie, those boogie woogie chorus girls from T.O. put on a great show at the Courthouse on Oct. 15 and helped us raise more than $4,000 for children, seniors and exhibition programs at the Heritage Complex. Thanks to the guests, committee and silent auction donors for their participation.

The People's Republic of China comes to The Region of Peel Archives

The Region of Peel Archives hosted a delegation of eight archivists from Jhejiang Province of the People's Republic of China in the early fall.

Diane Allengame-Kuster and Brian Gilchrist welcomed the group and their interpreter. The many differences in the types of records that the two countries collect and maintain were discussed during the visit.

The Chinese archives are more technically advanced in the actual processing of their records. Dong Shu-Fang, Director of the Archives Bureau for the City of Ningbo, indicated that the majority of their records were digitized. Most of the documents in the Peel Archives are not yet available in that format.

Two hours after their arrival and after many hand gestures, camera flashes, lots of pointing, smiles and laughter, the delegation left and extended an invitation to Diane and Brian to visit their institutions in the future.

Chinese archivists pay a visit to the Regional Archives.

Volunteers helping out in the Regional Archives.

ISSUE HIGHLIGHT

Region of Peel Archives

Established in 1977, the Archives is the 'new kid on the block', relatively speaking, as the Museum and Art Gallery were in existence almost a decade earlier.

With the creation of Regional Government in 1974, the heritage community became worried that records going back into the 1850s would be lost as the former townships, towns and villages merged into the Cities of Brampton, Mississauga and the Town of Caledon.

A committee of interested parties formed and lobbied the Region to establish a program that would be responsible for the perpetual care of these records, also ensuring that the archival records generated by the Region itself would receive adequate care. The mandate of the fledgling program was soon expanded to include the records of organizations, businesses and individuals. The first permanent location for the Archives was in the basement at 50 Main St. S., Brampton, then known as the Brampton Hydro building.

"Our mandate was to collect, preserve and make accessible the rich documentary heritage of the Region of Peel," remembers Senior Archivist Diane Allengame-Kuster. Collecting meant going out into the community to examine records. During the summer of 1982, Diane and two other students collected over

500 boxes of education records, dating back to the 1840s from a variety of locations including closets, basements and offices. Archivists still do 'field work' says Diane – "it's important for us to see the records before anyone decides to start going through them."

Preservation in the early days meant putting the material in acid-free file folders and boxes. "It's still the best thing we can do to help a record last," says Diane. "However for tough challenges we can now access skilled conservators on a contract basis."

Protecting the records is only part of the job, however. People need to know what is available and need to have a comfortable place to work with the material. From its inception, the Peel Archives gained a reputation as a user-friendly archives, where staff is ready, willing and able to get a researcher started on his/her journey of discovery. "When I started working here we were typing catalogue cards for each item. Now we use a database and digital imaging. Our researchers have become increasingly sophisticated users of technology, so our challenge is to provide the information in the format they need!"

Each year the Archives logs between 700 and 800 researcher visits. While the most popular topics are genealogy and house histories; the list is varied and unpredictable. Researchers can be school children with projects; senior citizens who arrive with laptops or PhD candidates who take notes with pencil. "It's always interesting to meet researchers and help them find the answers to their questions," says Diane.

The collection of the Archives is varied and interesting. Letters written in the 1840s capture the emotional intensity of settling a new country; farm journals from the 1870s document the growth of agriculture; propaganda posters from WWII remind us about life on the home-front, aerial photographs from the 1970s reveal the explosive growth in the Region. From records documenting the life of our earliest residents to photographs of the Mississauga train derailment, the collection of the Region of Peel Archives fully documents the history of this area.

Over the years a number of talented people have worked in the Archives. In 2003 the Archives welcomed Brian Gilchrist, "Brian's expertise in genealogy and his vast network of connections in the heritage field make him an invaluable resource in the Reading Room," says Diane.

In 2004 the Art Gallery of Peel received a major 'facelift', and this year it was the Archives' turn. "People are going to love the new Reading Room," says Diane. "The new colours, flooring and furniture work to make this an elegant, restful and comfortable space. The architect wanted the room to reflect the importance of research and learning and I think it's a very successful renovation."

PHC Staff Profile

Diane Allengame

Starting work part time as an archival technician in 1985 was a "dream come true", says Diane. "Finally I had found a job combining my journalistic skills with my deep interest in local history. My early years here were focused on public relations, development of an Archives outreach program for students, and black and white darkroom work. It was fun to be part of the opening of the Peel Heritage Complex in 1986, but the most exciting change occurred in 1996 when the Archives, Region of Peel Museum and Art Gallery of Peel began to work as one reorganized unit. At the Complex you will find archival items complimenting an exhibition in the Art Gallery, Museum artifacts on display in the Archives, art used as documentary evidence of our changing landscape…it's an integrated, holistic approach to heritage and it works."

The biggest change Diane notices from 1985 is in digital imaging and desktop publishing. "In 1986 when we wanted to send a letter, a secretary typed it out in triplicate," she laughs. "Now we write, edit and produce beautiful text panels, reports and catalogues all the time."

RENOVATION UPDATES

Over the past several months the Reading Room in the Archives has gone through a transformation. Gone now is the large counter and the vestibule around the former entrance. This has created a larger, more open space that will augment the room's ability to nurture scholarship and research. The microfilm readers and printers are now situated along the north wall, the ceiling height in the centre of the room has been increased and a display area is now in place to showcase archival acquisitions and collections. The new colour scheme and coats of paint come from a grant received through the **Benjamin Moore Community Restoration Program Grant.**

Like all large projects there have been delays. We are currently without furniture as it was specially ordered to connect with the design and use of the room. At this writing it is hoped that everything will be in place by the end of January 2006. In the meantime, we would encourage you to check out the new Reading Room, test the carpet and ask staff to show you around.

Early in 2006, the 2nd floor meeting room and 3rd floor classroom areas will undergo improvements to lighting, flooring and storage, making them more amenable as classroom and studio spaces.

We will try to keep everything 'business as usual' during the various stages of construction, but there may be times when our services may be disrupted. Please call ahead if you are planning a trip for research or to see an exhibition.

Funding News

The Complex received a **Benjamin Moore Community Restoration Grant** to paint the soon to be re-opened Archives Reading Room.

The Art Gallery of Peel is pleased to announce it has received the support of the **Canada Council for the Arts** through its **Project Assistance to Visual Arts and Fine Craft Organizations Program.** Each year the Canada Council supports over 2000 non-profit organizations and collectives with a mandate in the contemporary visual arts. The Gallery has been awarded two project grants for the exhibitions *Sydney Drum: Digital Painting* and *Harold Klunder: Inside the Picture.*

PEEL HERITAGE COMPLEX

Peel Heritage Complex
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905-791-4055

The Peel Heritage Complex is generously funded by the Region of Peel with additional support from the Ontario Arts Council and the Ontario Ministry of Culture. Volunteers, members, donors, local businesses and corporations contribute to the Peel Heritage Complex financially and through continued community support.

Region of Peel
Working for you

VISITING HOURS:

HOW TO REACH US

Monday – Friday: 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Thursday: 6 – 9 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday: Noon – 4:30 p.m.

(Closed: Good Friday April 14, 2006)

Note: The Archives is not open Thursday evenings or Sundays. There is limited on site parking; handicapped access is available from the parking lot. You can also park at Brampton City Hall.

E-mail: hcresearch@peelregion.ca
Web site: peelheritagecomplex.org

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